Amendments to the Specification:

Insert the paper copy of the Sequence Listing filed herewith following the Drawings.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 16, line 1 as with the following amended paragraph:

Gene-specific 5' and 3' primers were designed based on the sequence of the predicted open reading frame (ORF) and the corresponding EST in the database. The primer pairs used are listed below:

AtTLP1-5' (5'-ATGTCGTTCCGTAGCATAGTTCGT-3') (SEQ ID NO:23)
AtTLP1-3' (5'-TTATTCGCAAGCAAGTTTTGTGTCG-3') (SEQ ID NO:24)
AtTLP2-5' (5'-ATGTCTTTGAAAAGCATCCTTCGTGATC-3') (SEQ ID NO:25)
AtTLP2-3' (5'-TTACCCTTCACATGCCGGTTTGGTGTCA-3') (SEQ ID NO:26)
AtTLP3-5' (5'-ATGTCCTTCAAGAGTCTCATTCAG-3') (SEQ ID NO:27)
AtTLP3-3' (5'-TCATTCACATGCTATCTTGGTGTC-3') (SEQ ID NO:28)
AtTLP5-5' (5'-ATGTCGTTTCTGAGTATTGTTCG-3') (SEQ ID NO:29)
AtTLP5-3' (5'-TTATTCACATGCCAATTTAGTAT-3') (SEQ ID NO:30)
AtTLP6-5' (5'-ATGTCATTGAAGAACATAGTGAA-3') (SEQ ID NO:31)
AtTLP6-3' (5'-TCATTCGCAGACTGGCTTCGTGT-3') (SEQ ID NO:32)
AtTLP7-5' (5'-ATGCCTTTGTCACGGTCCCTC-3') (SEQ ID NO:33)
AtTLP7-3' (5'-TCACTCGCAGGCAAGTTTAGTG-3') (SEQ ID NO:34)
AtTLP8-5' (5'-ATGGCTGGTTCGAGAAAAGTGAA-3') (SEQ ID NO:35)
AtTLP8-3' (5'-TCAAACAGTACAACAAAGCTTGG-3') (SEQ ID NO:36)
AtTLP9-5' (5'–ATGACGTTCCGAAGTTTACTCCA-3') (SEQ ID NO:37)
AtTLP9-3' (5'-TTATTCACAGGCAATTCTGGTTT-3') (SEQ ID NO:38)
AtTLP10-5' (5'-ATGTCGTTTCGAGGCATTGTTCA-3') (SEQ ID NO:39)
AtTLP10-3' (5'-CTATTCACAAGCAAGCTTGGTGT-3') (SEQ ID NO:40)
AtTLP11-5' (5'-ATGTCGTTTCTGAGTATTGTTCG-3') (SEQ ID NO:41)
AtTLP11-3' (5'-TTATTCACATGCCAATTTAGTAT-3') (SEQ ID NO:42)

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 3 as with the following amended paragraph:

A coupled RT-PCR based assay was conducted to determine the expression pattern of AtTLP genes. Total RNA was isolated from roots, main and lateral stems, rosette leaves, flower clusters, and green siliques of 42-days-old soil-grown Arabidopsis. For each gene, a pair of gene-specific primers was chosen, and PCR amplifications were carried out using 15 ng of first strand cDNA synthesized as described above. Primers of ubiquitin gene, UBQ10, (5'-ATTTCTCAAAATCTTAAAAACTT-3' (SEQ ID NO:43) and 5'-TGATAGTTTTCC CAGTCAAC-3' (SEQ ID NO:44)) were used to amplify ubiquitin, which served as an internal loading standard (Norris et al., 1993, Plant Mol. Biol. 21: 895-906).

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 23, line 4 as with the following amended paragraph:

To identify attlp9 T-DNA insertion mutant, AtTLP9 (At3g06380) was used to search the T-DNA Express database at http://signal.salk.edu/cgi-bin/tdnaexpress. Two attlp9 T-DNA insertion mutants (ABRC seed stock SALK_016678 and 051138) were identified and designated as attlp9-1 and attlp9-2. T3 seeds of attlp9-1 and attlp9-2 were obtained from the Arabidopsis Biological Resource Center (Ohio State University, Columbus). The position of the T-DNA within the AtTLP9 gene was re-confirmed by sequencing a PCR-amplified fragment amplified by primer pairs corresponding to the T-DNA left borders and the AtTLP9 gene specific primer. The following primer pairs were used for attlp9-1 and attlp9-2 specific amplification,

attlp9-1: N1, 5' -ATGACGTTCCGAAGTTTACTC- 3' (SEQ ID NO:45);

LBa1, 5' -TGGTTCACGTAGTGGGCCATC- 3' (SEQ ID NO:46);

attlp9-2: C1, 5' -TTATTCACAGGCAATTCTGGT- 3' (SEQ ID NO:47); and

LBa1, 5' -TGGTTCACGTAGTGGGCCATC- 3' (SEQ ID NO:48).